

The Office of State and Local Government Coordination and Preparedness (SLGCP) in the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is now accepting applications for SAFER grants. The deadline for receipt of SAFER grant applications is 5:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time (EDT) on June 28, 2005.

The applications are automated and are accessible from the website for the Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) program at <http://www.firegrantsupport.com>. The website also provides useful information on the program priorities and process that are discussed in the SAFER Program Guidance. The website's list of Frequently Asked Questions will be updated as the program staff learns the areas of inquiry that are most often presented. An applicant tutorial on the SAFER grants, designed to instruct users on the preparation and submittal of competitive applications, is also available on the website. Applicants who have questions regarding the SAFER grant opportunities should contact the help desk at 1-866-274-0960 or at [firegrants@dhs.gov](mailto:firegrants@dhs.gov) <<mailto:firegrants@dhs.gov>>. During the SAFER application period, the help desk will operate Monday to Friday, from 9:00 am to 7:00 pm (EDT), but is prepared to revise hours of operation based on volume and demand.

Eligible applicants for SAFER grants include fire departments (for the hiring of firefighters) and state or local organizations as well as volunteer and combination fire departments (for volunteer recruitment and retention grants). Applicants should note that the SAFER application is very similar in appearance to the "fire grants" application, but all applicants are strongly encouraged to read the program guidance and utilize all other materials at the AFG website.

The AFG program is administered by SLGCP in cooperation with the U.S. Fire Administration. Through the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act of 2005, Congress provided \$65 million for the SAFER grants.